THE BURUSHO OF HUNZA

342 The Hunza dwelling house is a fortress-like cube of stone and mud whose front door is screened from the hostile outer air by a barn,

102

342 the door of which is strategically placed at right angles to, and some
354 distance from, the main door. The only ventilation is the central
171 smoke-hole of highly elaborate construction, three wooden frames

1: Lorimer T-3 (1920–4; 1934–5) 1938 AV7 Burusho AV7

[117] diagonally superimposed on each other, exactly duplicating some of
354 the ancient smoke-holes recently unearthed in Central Asia by Le
342 Coq. A large store-room about 6 feet deep runs the full width and height of the house and is entered by a door at the back of the central stream. It is provided with a minute, unglazed, shuttered window, the only 'window' known in Hunza except in the houses of the Mir
352 and the Wazir. The furnishings of the living room are simple but
513 adequate. Two large sleeping benches, some 7 feet wide and 9 feet long, flank the side walls, and are raised 18 inches or so above the floor.
354 The sleepers roll themselves in homespun blankets or padded quilts and sleep crosswise on the bench like parallel sausage rolls. One bench is reserved for men and the other for women. The hearth occupies the centre of the floor and is outlined by four stone kerbs. The sleeping benches, which serve by day as sitting places, are screened at head and foot by capacious cupboards, one of which serves the mistress of the house for her kneading trough and other utensils, another takes the form of a large bin with sub-divisions to hold the current supply of flour.

415 The normal cooking pots and oil vessels, lamp cruses, etc., are of
324 hollowed soap-stone, often of gracefully irregular shape, reflecting that of the boulder from which they have been hewn. Gourds furnish
322 the usual 'jugs', and wooden bowls, nowadays frequently turned on a
177 lathe, the eating vessels. Wooden spoons and ladles are cut in one piece, the handles being formed by a convenient branch or twig. The delightful result is that no two pots, bowls, or spoons, are identical in size or shape. Unfortunately aluminium or enamelled iron vessels and galvanized buckets are finding their way into the country. We ourselves were, I fear, guilty of adding to their number and even introducing a few multi-service kerosene tins.

241 The greater number of field implements are still of wood, though
412 the ploughshares are now usually shod with an iron shoe or tip, and a
563 lucky family may have acquired an iron spade or hoe or a five-pronged iron fork. A small community of ultimately Indian origin, the Béricho,
326 lives amongst the Burusho and supplies the music for their polo and dancing and the blacksmithery of their simple ironwork: the shears, the rude sickle, the sharpened scrap of iron that serves as razor.

[412] The sharpened stone or ibex horn, which till very recently served
335 for all necessary carpentry, is now replaced by the iron-headed adze
342 which hacks out the steps on the log ladder and shapes the narrow planks for doors and cupboards. The true Hunza door consists of a set of

No. IV.

[102]

The Story of Kisar (alias Pangchu).

010

Lama-ulo hin dolatman hiran bam. Ine hirt guru-mo waztulo sisar gut oyu-i bam. I-kz gu-rulo hin jot giyasan paida manimi, Ji.u-simi. Dyu-sin i-ne giyu-s, i-ne yamis hi-rt ixakinmutac mamu bilum, ditsen yu-iami i-ne jot giyu-s, i-ne nyuian (or, ni.ukan), mundaq manimi. Mana-sar i-ne i-k Dunga Mi-ru o-suman. Uyum imanimi

171

Kisar, the central figure of this tale, is no petty personage of merely local distinction, but a hero of renown throughout Northern Asia. Kesar provides the subject of a lengthy epic in Tibetan, and Gesser Khan's exploits are recorded in a Mongolian saga. His fame is further perpetuated in the unwritten folk tales of many Siberian and Mongolian peoples.

The tale of his deeds was found to be current in every village in Ladakh by A. H. Francke, who collected and published two of these oral Tibetan versions, with an argument for their significance as the relics of a primitive religion. It is from this tradition that the Burushaski version seems to derive.

The home of the Kesar legend remains undetermined, and this is not the place to examine either its character or its geographical extension.

It will suffice to provide clues to the literature on the subject in the following references:

Bergmann, Benjamin. "Nomadische Streifereien unter den Kalmücken in den Jahren 1802 und 1803." Hartmann, Riga. 1804. Vol. III pp. 229—294. "Bakula Gämbi Chan," Eine mongolische Religionsschrift in 2 Büchern.

Schmidt, I. J. "Die Taten Bogda Gesser Chan's." (Translated from the Mongolian). Petersburg and Leipzig 1839. Reprinted, Antiqua Verlag E. G. M. B. H., Berlin 1925.

Francke, A. H. "The Spring Myth of the Kesar Saga." "Indian Antiquary." Vol. XXX, 1901 pp. 329—341. Vol. XXXI, 1902 pp. 33—40 and 147—157.

"A Lower Ladakhi Version of the Kesar Saga." "Bibliotheca Indica." (A. S. B.) 1905—1909. Fasicull (New Series), Nos 1134, 1146, 1164 & 1213.

The article "Gling Chas" in Hasting's "Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics," vol. VIII, pp. 75 ff.

4: Lorimer L-3 (1930-4; 1934-8) 1935 AV7 Burusho AV7

No. IV.

The Adventures of Kisar. [101]

In Lama there was a rich man. In the Spring season he was giving wheat to the people. A small child made its appearance in the wheat and he took it out. The rich man's daughter-in-law was with milk and he brought the child (home) and reared it (with her help). It grew up and they gave it the name of Dungpa Miru

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Laufer, Berthold. A review and criticism of Francke's "Spring Myth of the Kesar Saga" (as originally published in German). "Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes." Vol. XV 1901 pp. 77—107.

Contains what amounts to a bibliography of previous literature relating to Kesar or Gesser Khan.

Poppe, N. "Untersuchung der sprachlichen Eigentümlichkeiten der mongolischen Version des Gesser Khan." "Asia Major" Vol. III. Fasc. I and III, Lipsiae 1926.

The little I have to contribute on the subject will be found in "Folk-Lore," Vol. XLII, 1931 no. 3.

This text presents a good many difficulties, a considerable proportion of which are probably due to the circumstances in which it was recorded. 'Ali Madad of Baltit, the old man who related the story, was only able to do so at a pace at which it was impossible to write it down.

He could not repeat himself, and when asked to do so was liable to lose the thread of the story. The services of my usual informant, Imam Yar Beg, had therefore to be requisitioned to catch each episode as it fell from Ali Madad's lips and retell it at a pace and in a form convenient for the recorder.

The process was not an easy one for any of the persons concerned and it undoubtedly resulted in some confusions and errors which were not all eliminated by subsequent revision.

1 *dyarde . . . . mordaq mastnel.* — The meaning of this is clear, but it affords an example of the confusion just referred to.

No. XXXIII.

Hunzulo Gorz Dastur.

000 Hirz iryor gusan dumurtaasor rak etimi kz, amirz eyun bo kz
irnz ka gurl manavsor rai etimi kz, irnz havler hin irmo jarman ya
gorurrum sisan horaŋuš e durmarčor verčai.i. Irnor "horaŋuš" se.ibarn.

Inz horaŋušz inz havlz nirn adabz ka ortai.i: "Kurito ja falarno
5 inz hirz iryor Xuda kz Peyambarz hukumatz gori durmarčor darrai.i,
'ja airyor gori jo' nusrn." Inz hirz irtz gunteulo horaŋušer e yuryasz
bor ečičai.i. "Yz bz maimi borerysn," nusrn, verčai.i.

Yat guntar kz horaŋuš irnz havler ničai.i. Ho yuryasor bor ičičai.i.
Horaŋuš darl numra, "jati ditsu.in" nusrn, dorztsum iri dasin daryorwarz
10 mudaljai.i. Ho, "Falarno guntar gor ezrn, fularno guntar dan.u
walčrn, da fularno šukuro pfurl hanik dišrn" nusrn, nukurškin
hilrvsor dasin(er) musal gi barn.

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gorz dastur — gor stan was given as an alternative for *gorz*, and *mirur* for *dastur*.

3 *gorurrum sisan* — "a warm person", cp. the English, "a warm friend".

6 *ja airyor* — Ms. *ja iryor*, doubtless owing to the running together of the *ja* and the pronoun prefix *a-*. There are other instances of *a* + *i* > *ai* as well as > *e*.

7 *bor* — seems here to be used in the sense of "promise", as in English "he gave his word".

9–10 *daryorwarz mudaljai.i* — a note adds that he sprinkles the flour on her head.

10–11 *dan.u walčrn* — A sort of technical term also denoting a ritual act. I take it as meaning literally: to put the griddle on the fire.

585 171 The griddle also plays an important role in the Shina marriage ritual. The term used in Shina is *tavo dorbi*, 'placing the griddle (on the fire)'. It is rather surprising that the words used in the Burushaski account for "Marriage" "bridegrooms party" "bride" and "bridegroom", *gor*, *gorosi* and *gorosa*, are Shina (or shared with Shina).

Biddulph G-3 (1873-1878) 1880 Afghanistan XVII
4
AV3 Dard AV3
Burushe AV7

D 771 174 778

fication. It plays a conspicuous part in the incantations of the Dainyals, and on a great man entering a Shin village a pan of burning Chili branches is waved before him. On certain occasions both men and women saturate themselves with the smoke, which is of a particularly pungent nature.

D 171 778 B 171 778

The custom of Chili worship does not appear to have penetrated to Hunza or Nager, nor is any trace of it to be found in the Oxus Valley, in Chitral, or among the tribes of the Swat Valley; but among the Siah-Posh it seems to exist in almost the same form as it did among the Shins. Chili wood, or Padam, is still taken down to the Punjab to be used in Hindoo ceremonials. According to Colonel Prejevalski, the same tree is also held sacred by the Mongols and Tangutans, who burn the branches for incense during prayer time. At Hemis Shukpa, within 20 miles of Leh, a few trees of great age exist, and are held in much veneration by the Tartars of the village, though the tree is not generally an object of Tartar respect.[1] It may be that the feeling of veneration was imbibed from the Shins, whose influence must have extended nearly to Leh. It is still usual in Gilgit to sprinkle goat's blood on a tree of any kind before cutting it down.

D 771 171 B 771 171

The religion of the whole country is now some form of Mahommedanism, and in the immense knot of mountains of which Yassin forms the centre, three different types of the same religion have met, and are now striving for the mastery. From the south, Soonnee Moollahs have carried their tenets up the different valleys with more or less success. From the eastward a current of Shiah doctrines has set in from Iskardo; and from the westward the curious Maulai, or Muglee,[2] tenets have found their way up the Oxus Valley. It is to be noticed that the subversion of Hindooism by Mahommedanism in the remoter valleys seems to have been extremely gradual, and to have been more owing to gradual conversion than to persecution.

D 771 173 B 771 173

The genealogical tables of the present ruling families of Hunza, Nager, and Gilgit, enable a fair idea to be formed of the date of the introduction of Islam into the country. Tradition records the death of the Gilgit Ra with the non-Mussulman name of Shiri Buddutt,[3] at the hands of a stranger bearing the Mussulman name of Azru, or Azor, from whom the present Ra of Gilgit, and the Thums of Hunza and Nager, trace

[1] Henderson's *Labour in Yarkund*, page 51.
[2] The common uneducated pronunciation.
[3] The meaning of the name is perhaps "Given by Sri Buddha."—*Sri Buddha Dutta*